

SPECIAL REPORT
of the
ACADEMIC MATTERS COUNCIL
concerning
**SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDELINES FOR
UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROPOSALS**
(Amended at the 704th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
March 24, 2011)

Presented at the
679th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
December 11, 2008

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Sen. Doc. No. 09-018A

On February 14, 2008, the Ad Hoc Committee on Certificates (ACERT) was established by vote of the Faculty Senate (Sen. Doc. No. 08-018A). The Faculty Senate has “certificate” proposals pending in several Councils which do not conform to the University’s current understanding of and regulations regarding “certificates.” The purpose of this Ad Hoc Committee is to deliberate the purpose and desirability of current and proposed undergraduate and graduate certificate programs and to determine whether to recommend changes in the University’s current policies and procedures with respect to certificates at both the graduate level and the undergraduate level.

The Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Certificates (Sen. Doc. No. 09-001) was presented at the Faculty Senate Meeting of September 18, 2008. As part of this report, the Academic Matters Council was asked to develop guidelines for approval and review of undergraduate certificates pertaining to the following issues, as well as others that come to the attention of the Academic Matters Council:

- Specific admissions criteria and procedures, if any, for matriculated and/or non-matriculated students.
- Availability of component courses, and access to those courses for certificate students.
- Criteria for certificate program coherence.
- Explicit evaluation plan (such as numerical data on admissions, completions, availability of faculty and courses, student evaluations) for the purposes of review and continuation.

The Supplemental Guidelines for Undergraduate Certificate Proposals were presented and approved by the Faculty Senate on December 11, 2008 (Sen. Doc. No. 09-018). Since that time, additional questions not addressed by the existing Supplemental Guidelines have been raised. The Academic Matters Council would like to provide additional clarification to the Supplemental Guidelines for Undergraduate Certificate Proposals. The additional language being proposed has been added to the existing guidelines below in *bold italics*.

Supplemental Guidelines for Undergraduate Certificate Proposals

I. Approval criteria

- A. The proposed curriculum expresses a clear educational objective to be achieved in an efficient and well-defined manner.
- B. The proposed sequence of course work must offer a clear and appropriate educational objective at the baccalaureate level.
- C. A perceived need for such a certificate should exist. This provision might be defined in terms of either external markets (e.g., external demand for the skills associated with such a certificate) or internal academic needs (e.g., the need for a critical mass of students in a given discipline).
- D. A certificate proposal ***must have a minimum number of 15 credit hours and a minimum number of four courses. Credits completed by the student must be residence credits unless substituted by the department or sponsoring Certificate program. The Certificate may include a maximum of 6 credit hours of experimental courses, special topics or seminars. Independent study, internships, practicums, or honors thesis credit hours may not be included as part of the minimum 15 credit hours required.***

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- E. All proposals must present a schedule of course availability showing that the Certificate program can be completed within a reasonable period of time: A Certificate proposal relying on courses offered outside the sponsoring department or program must provide evidence of agreement by the unit(s) offering those courses.
- F. No more than two courses used to satisfy the requirements for one certificate program may be applied toward another Certificate program.

II. Overlap

- A. Certificate requirements may overlap with requirements of a degree program and/or other certificates in whole or in part.
- B. The extent of any overlap must be clearly described in the proposal.
- C. If a student who has completed a Certificate seeks clearance for a degree program which overlaps with that Certificate program, then the Registrar will note on the transcript that the certificate has been superseded by the award of the degree.

III. Periodic review criteria (every 5 years)

In general, Certificates will be evaluated according to the following measures:

- A. Statistics on completion of the Certificate program (i.e., number of students, matriculated and non-matriculated, time it took to complete the Certificate).
- B. Availability of courses, student enrollment per course, faculty teaching the courses, student evaluations.
- C. In accordance with University policy, any experimental course listed in the original Certificate proposal that has been taught at least three times needs to go through the permanent course approval process.

MOVED: 19-09 That the Faculty Senate approve the Supplemental Guidelines for Undergraduate Certificate Proposals (as amended), as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 09-018A.